

Under the provisions of Section 413.031 of the Texas Workers' Compensation Act, Title 5, Subtitle A of the Texas Labor Code, effective June 17, 2001 and Commission Rule 133.305 titled Medical Dispute Resolution - General and 133.308 titled Medical Dispute Resolution by Independent Review Organizations, the Medical Review Division assigned an IRO to conduct a review of the disputed medical necessity issues between the requestor and the respondent. The dispute was received on 12-29-03.

The Medical Review Division has reviewed the IRO decision and determined that **the requestor prevailed** on the issues of medical necessity. Therefore, upon receipt of this Order and in accordance with §133.308(r)(9), the Commission hereby orders the respondent and non-prevailing party to **refund the requestor \$650.00** for the paid IRO fee. For the purposes of determining compliance with the order, the Commission will add 20 days to the date the order was deemed received as outlined on page one of this order.

In accordance with §413.031(e), it is a defense for the carrier if the carrier timely complies with the IRO decision.

Based on review of the disputed issues within the request, the Medical Review Division has determined that **medical necessity was the only issue** to be resolved. The Propoxyphene, Carisoprodol and Vioxx were found to be medically necessary. The respondent raised no other reasons for denying reimbursement for the above listed services.

On this basis, and pursuant to §§402.042, 413.016, 413.031, and 413.019 of the Act, the Medical Review Division hereby ORDERS the respondent to pay the unpaid medical fees in accordance with the fair and reasonable rate as set forth in Commission Rule 133.1(a)(8) plus all accrued interest due at the time of payment to the requestor within 20 days of receipt of this order. This Order is applicable to dates of service 01-06-03 through 02-13-03 in this dispute.

The respondent is prohibited from asserting additional denial reasons relative to this Decision upon issuing payment to the requestor in accordance with this Order (Rule 133.307(j)(2)).

This Order is hereby issued this 23rd day of February 2004.

Debra L. Hewitt
Medical Dispute Resolution Officer
Medical Review Division
DLH/dlh

IRO Certificate #4599

NOTICE OF INDEPENDENT REVIEW DECISION

February 7, 2004

Re: IRO Case # M5-04-1161-01

Texas Worker's Compensation Commission:

___ has been certified as an independent review organization (IRO) and has been authorized to perform independent reviews of medical necessity for the Texas Worker's Compensation Commission (TWCC). Texas HB. 2600, Rule 133.308 effective January 1, 2002, allows a claimant or provider who has received an adverse medical necessity determination from a carrier's internal process, to request an independent review by an IRO.

In accordance with the requirement that TWCC assign cases to certified IROs, TWCC assigned this case to ___ for an independent review. ___ has performed an independent review of the proposed care to determine if the adverse determination was appropriate. For that purpose, ___ received relevant medical records, any documents obtained from parties in making the adverse determination, and any other documents and/or written information submitted in support of the appeal.

The case was reviewed by a physician who is Board Certified in Neurological Surgery, and who has met the requirements for TWCC Approved Doctor List or has been approved as an exception to the Approved Doctor List. He or she has signed a certification statement attesting that no known conflicts of interest exist between him or her and any of the treating physicians or providers, or any of the physicians or providers who reviewed the case for a determination prior to referral to ___ for independent review. In addition, the certification statement further attests that the review was performed without bias for or against the carrier, medical provider, or any other party to this case.

The determination of the ___ reviewer who reviewed this case, based on the medical records provided, is as follows:

History

The patient is a male who in ___ was moving 130 – 150 pound barrels and developed sharp pain in his left hip and buttock region. He was treated with physical therapy early in his course without benefit. An MRI of the lumbar spine failed to reveal any surgical pathology. The patient was treated with continued physical therapy, and also with sacroiliac joint injections and trigger point

injections in the left lower lumbar region. The patient continued to have discomfort as of 10/16/03, the time of the last report provided for this review. In a report dated 10/11/01 the patient was to return to some light duty.

Requested Service(s)

Propox/APAP, Carisoprodol, Vioxx 1/6/03 – 2/13/03

Decision

I disagree with the carrier's decision to deny the requested medications.

Rationale

The muscle relaxant, pain medication and anti-inflammatory medication were all necessary to give this individual the relief of discomfort that allowed him to function. If the patient is still continuing to require these medications some one-year after they were disputed, then more pain management or surgical evaluation may be necessary.

This medical necessity decision by an Independent Review Organization is deemed to be a Commission decision and order.